

DISCLAIMER: This FAQ provides information about legal name changes. It has been provided by the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics. Its is to be used as a resource only and does not constitute legal advice.

**Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics
Legal Name Changes
Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **Q. Who can submit a legal name change to the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics?**

A. Our office can only accept and process legal name changes for persons who have an Ohio Birth Record. We will not accept a legal name change for someone that was born in another state.
2. **Q. Does every legal name change have to be sent to the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics?**

A. A person who receives a legal name change is not required to submit the order to our office. It is up to the customer to determine if they want their birth record updated with the new name.
3. **Q. Does a legal name change create a new birth record?**

A. Legal name changes are filed as attachments to the original birth record. A new birth record is not created.
4. **Q. What all needs to be submitted to your office once a legal name change has been ordered?**

A. Our office only needs a certified legal name change order. It must contain a raised seal of the court and/or an original ink signature of the judge. In addition, the court order must have been granted by a US court. There is no cost associated with our office processing the legal name change. The only cost to the customer is when they want a certified birth record once the legal name change has been processed. That cost is \$21.50 for each certified copy requested.
5. **Q. A married person wants to change their last name to a spouse's last name. Do they need to go to court?**

A. Historically it has not been required to file for a legal name change due to marriage. A marriage does not automatically change the name on the birth record. Please visit the Social Security Administration's website: <https://faq.ssa.gov/ics/support/kbanswer.asp?QuestionsID=3749>. This web address provides instruction along with links to the required forms needed to complete the process with their office. Once a new social security card is obtained the petitioner can contact their local Bureau of Motor Vehicles to obtain a new driver license of state photo identification with the married name. With the newly issued stat identification they may update the name with any other entity.

6. Q. **If someone is divorced can they go back to their maiden name?**

A. The birth certificate should already reflect the maiden name of the individual if no prior name change has occurred. If the person went to the court after being married and submitted a legal name change to our office to attach to the original birth record, then they would need to have another legal name change done to go back to their maiden name. Our office does not accept divorce decrees to change the name on a birth record.

7. Q. **Will you accept a name change that lists more than one person?**

A. Yes, we can accept a name change order that lists more than one person in the order. However, if the order lists children and parents only the name on each individual birth record will be changed. Parent names will not be changed on the child's birth record to reflect their new name.

8. Q. **Do you have any limitations when accepting a legal name change?**

A. We can only accept and process legal name changes for births that occur in Ohio. Name changes should only come from Probate Court. Orders from Juvenile or Domestic Relations Court would be considered a Paternity Action. We cannot accept names containing special characters or symbols- @, \$, ?, etc. (e.g. John Ca\$h)

9. Q. **Can one person have multiple name changes?**

A. Yes, it is possible for one person to have multiple name changes.

10. Q. **What should a legal name change order include if a married person only wants to change their first name, but their current name is their married name?**

A. A legal name change will be reflected on a birth certificate as the order is written by the court. If the birth certificate surname is to remain the same, it must be specified in the order to keep the same surname on the birth certificate.